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DOUGLAS S. DRUMMOND
TIMOTHY JONES
BRADLEY NUREMBERG



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-1431 Fax (213) 633-5102

MINUTES

Thursday, April 14, 2005 Meeting
6:00 p.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration Room 374 A

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

John Hybarger, Chairperson
Sandra Aronberg, Vice-Chairperson
Douglas Drummond
Timothy Jones
Brad Nuremberg

STAFF PRESENT

Jim Corbett
Peter Papadakis
Garen Khachian

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Hybarger called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

TWO GRANT REQUESTS FROM THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOURTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT:

1. **\$2,500 TO PURCHASE CATFISH TO STOCK CERRITOS LAKE FOR THE JUNE 4, 2005 'KNABE KATCH' FISHING DERBY EVENT AT THE CERRITOS REGIONAL PARK; AND**
2. **\$2,500 TO PURCHASE CATFISH TO STOCK LA MIRADA LAKE FOR THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2005 'KNABE KATCH' FISHING DERBY EVENT AT THE LA MIRADA PARK**

Gail Tierney, Senior Deputy, Fourth Supervisorial District provided an overview of the 2005 'Knabe Katch' fishing events and its benefit for the public's well-being and educational experience in outdoor recreational activities. This year's events project a total of 800-1,000 people including foster families, neighboring schools and the general public.

On motion of Commissioner Drummond, seconded by Commissioner Aronberg, the Commission unanimously approved recommending the Board of Supervisors approve grant requests for \$2,500 each to provide catfish to stock the lakes for the June 4, 2005 'Knabe Katch' at Cerritos Park and the September 24, 2005 'Knabe Katch' at La Mirada Park.

Chairperson Hybarger introduced and welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Timothy Jones, Second Supervisorial District, to the Commission.

PRESENTATION ON WEST NILE VIRUS

Dr. Sabrina Drill, Natural Resource Advisor, University of California Cooperative Extension for Los Angeles County, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the affects

of the West Nile Virus (WNV) (copy on file). Dr. Drill explained the WNV as flavivirus and similar to the St. Louis and Japanese encephalitis. Symptoms experienced in humans range from none to severe headache, fever, paralysis and death; which occurs mostly in elders or immuno-suppressed individuals. Most transmission is from mosquito bites, but blood transfusions, organ transplants, breast milk, and sexual circumstances also contribute to the virus' spread. Dr. Drill reported the WNV was first detected in a mosquito pool July 2003 in Imperial Valley, California. The virus spread throughout the state with most activity occurring in southern California wherein 1,136 positive pools, 805 seroconverted chickens, and 3,232 dead birds have been discovered.

According to a 2003 experimental infection study of 25 species, WNV symptoms on wildlife include but are not limited to: viremia and other severe illness, however, some species never developed infection, and in fact, developed antibodies and fought the infection. Dr. Drill stated the impact of avian (bird) population loss is difficult to quantify and depends on a bird's specific role in the ecosystem and current populous. Infections of nuisance bird species may have good affects on wildlife, but endangered species may be completely loss if infected. Further, species high on the food chain such as the owl/raptor, can produce 'knock-off' effects in the food order thereby creating an irregular environment.

Commissioner Aronberg asked if some mosquitoes are more active in the day or night. Dr. Scott, Wildlife Specialist, University of California Cooperative Extension for Berkley, advised mosquito activity occurs day and night and is predicated on weather conditions such as humidity and heat.

Chairperson Hybarger inquired if health kits are available to test for WNV. Dr. Drill reported two main health kits are available but have produced both false positives and false negatives; State lab prefers verifying WNV results in-house, but they have allowed some vector agencies to use the health kits. Further, none of the available health kits have been adopted by any wildlife agencies. Chairperson Hybarger asked if collected data on WNV is provided to the appropriate agencies for testing. Dr. Drill stated vector agencies are efficient in transporting data, however, wildlife agencies are not fully aware of reporting data collection to appropriate agencies. Dr. Thomas Scott stated wildlife agencies are understaffed and have difficulty in coordinating collected data to proper agencies for testing.

Dr. Scott reported the State is more concerned about the spread of WNV throughout the U.S. than with specific localities of infection. Chairperson Hybarger inquired as to the potential repercussions if virus evolves into a new strain or undergoes a genetic mutation. Dr. Drill advised the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) is monitoring the potentiality, but Department of Health Services (DHS) has yet to participate. Dr. Scott commented that the virus has remained the same over the past several years. Commissioner Jones asked about the potential infection for humans in handling WNV bird carcasses. Dr. Scott reported dead birds produce a bloody fluid that may be transmitted into humans if their skin is cut or open; generally, wearing protective gloves should keep humans safe from infection.

Commissioner Nuremberg asked if there is a standard procedure for the disposal of

dead birds. Dr. Scott stated no standard procedure exists other than to wear proper gloves and dispose into a trash receptacle. Commissioner Nuremberg suggested the disposal of dead birds at landfills may cause rodent species to become infected by WNV.

Dr. Scott briefly reviewed the slow movement of WNV in Russia compared to the expedient pattern in the United States. Dr. Scott suggested keeping a healthy immune system during summer months to combat WNV susceptibility. The wildlife and scientific community have noted the '2nd year hypothesis' could stem the spread of WNV. The hypothesis indicates WNV has used up most of its potential hosts; potential virus outbreak could end; and biogeographic components of dispersal may occur. In response to Commissioner Nuremberg, Dr. Drill stated 25 fatalities were recorded in human cases of WNV in California.

Commissioner Aronberg asked whether a vaccine is being developed for humans with WNV and if blood transfusions require pre-screening of patients. Dr. Drill advised blood transfusions do require pre-screening but not necessarily for WNV, and no cure of the phenomenon is available because it's viral.

In response to Commissioner Nuremberg, Dr. Scott stated the telephone (hotline) number for reporting WNV is 1-877-WNVBIRD. Commissioner Jones asked if WNV has been traced in Catalina. Dr. Scott stated minimal testing has occurred but no reports of infected birds have been found in Avalon/Catalina.

Dr. Scott reported the summer season in California is critical due to the increased irrigation used for lawns/landscapes, which breeds mosquitoes. Water conservation may help reduce the increased chance of WNV infection.

Dr. Drill reported wetlands restoration is pivotal in controlling WNV. Inferior water quality and poorly kept swimming pools increases mosquito presence. Also, unkempt urban drains/runoffs develop algae which perpetuates mosquito breeding/feeding.

Chairperson Hybarger asked if monitoring of bird farms, particularly gamebird species, is being conducted. Dr. Drill stated quail and pheasant are susceptible, however, poultry species seem relatively safe from WNV.

Dr. Aronberg asked about the potentiality of contracting WNV while cleaning or dressing a bird. Dr. Scott reported he's unaware of any agencies working with game bird hunter groups to research the possibility of infection.

Chairperson Hybarger inquired if a lack of funding exists to study WNV. Dr. Scott reported WNV funding has been used for public health studies but not wildlife research.

Chairperson Hybarger thanked the guest speakers for their informative presentation and asked that they keep the Commission updated.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairperson Hybarger reported on an inconsistency in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune newspaper regarding alleged funding shortfall for the San Bernadino National Forest's research for sheep. The article originally stated \$3.9 million was returned, but actual amount was only \$300,000; this should last 2 years

and pay for capture, collar, tracking and supplies.

- Bighorn Sheep March 2005 Survey: Sighted 140 sheep at the east end of the range. Researchers were unable to fly into other areas due to inclement weather. Estimated 170 sheep exist throughout the entire area. Steve Holl is working on developing a grant to fund a graduate student to investigate land recruitment and nutritional factors possibly affecting reproduction for sheep.
- Department of Fish and Game released a letter regarding Pink Eye issue in Arizona and the affects domestic goats may have on California Bighorn sheep. One developer was identified who owned a flock of goats carrying the disease to the wild sheep and causing their demise. The Board of Supervisors 9 mile advisory limit must be enforced to protect domestic animals from harming future wildlife.
- Piru Creek update: Commissioner Nuremberg reported on the public hearing at Agoura City Hall concerning Piru creek. He reported the Fish and Wildlife Service stated closure of natural flows would affect the trout and its gene species in the creek. Also, the Department of Water Resources is rethinking their original position on restoring natural water regime to the creek. Caltrout will be the lead for performing another scientific study on wildlife issues surrounding Piru Creek.

Matters not Posted (To be Briefly Discussed and Placed on the Agenda for a Future Meeting)

There were none

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

